

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated August 7, 2006, has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

In the Office Action, claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,825,439 to Noriyama.

Applicants thank the Examiner and her supervisor for the Interview conducted on January 10, 2007, during which the Noriyama reference and the claims were discussed,

Claims 1 and 6 are currently amended to recite feature believed inherent in the original claims as filed. Claims 1-5 and 6-10 are allowable over the cited references in that each of these claims recites a combination of elements including, for example, "wherein said grooves expose a passivation layer beneath said pad," (claims 1 and 6). None of the cited references including Noriyama, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 and claims 2-5, which depend from claim 1 and claims 6 and claims 7-10, which depend from claim 6, are allowable over the cited references. Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

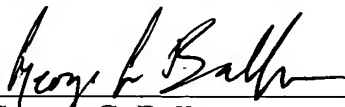
If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. *A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.*

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: February 5, 2007

By



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